European empire having its capital and administrative seat at Paris. They were held by the men of the Terror in 1793, by the Directory in 1796, by the overwhelming majority of the French people in 1798, and by a respectable number of Germans and of Americans in the years immediately succeeding; while they are still held by immense numbers of those in whom the idea of nationality is dominant and preponderates over all other political concepts.

The Berlin Decree, which is generally considered to have inaugurated the Continental System in form, is, in fact, antedated by the Orders in Council of Great Britain. During 1801 English commerce was considerably greater than it was during 1802, the year of nominal peace; and this was due, of course, to the fact that the commercial welfare was not even nominally discontinued. The real trouble felt by Lord Whitworth, the British ambassador at Paris, was that the existing commercial situation of his country was intolerable, and that he must find some casus belli in order to end it. We have explained how he fixed on a very trivial pretext, the conduct of Bonaparte at a public reception in the Tuileries, and that Great Britain had much difficulty in making the flimsy excuse appear important. The fact was that the First Consul was using the peace to extend the protective system of France over all the lands which he had conquered in northern and central Italy and to force Holland and Switzerland into his customs union. In consequence English commerce was suffering, and the mission of Sebastiani into the Orient made it seem highly probable to English merchants that the process of further diminishing their trade was already under way in those distant parts. The publication of Sebas-tiani's report was the last straw in the burden of the British merchants, and they refused to carry the load